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ABSTRACT

This study describes the range of intercultural sensitivity in a small sample of seventh-grade students. The study examines the range of intercultural sensitivity and salient factors associated with it. Specifically the study seeks to clarify the understanding of the relationships that may exist among empathy, authoritarianism, gender, intercultural contact, second language acquisition, and early adolescents' intercultural sensitivity (ICS) levels. Both qualitative and quantitative data collection was used. A written survey questionnaire, a standardized open-ended interview format, and informal interviews were used to gather data from the 145 participants. From the data, it was found that intercultural friendships, gender orientation, and locale appeared as salient predictors of ICS level. A statistically significant positive association existed between empathy and ICS with a statistically significant negative relationship noted between ICS and authoritarianism. (EH)

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Intercultural Sensitivity and the Early Adolescent

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"Culture is communication and communication is culture."

Edward T. Hall, The Silent Language, 1959, p. 169

Introduction

As the United States society becomes more multicultural, people from a plethora of cultures will increasingly be compelled to live together. James Banks (1995), a noted expert on multicultural education states, "A pluralistic democratic society functions best when its diverse groups believe they are an integral part of its institutions and social structure" (p. 617). To continue as a vibrant democratic society and live in harmony, United States citizens must learn to tolerate and respect cultural difference.

Nowhere is the increase of cultural diversity more evident than in United States schools. In 1995, 32.3 percent of school children in grades K-12 were of minority heritage (National Center for Educational Statistics, 1996, p. 14). By the year 2020, it is projected that the minority population of America's public and private elementary and secondary schools will increase to over 50 percent (Grant & Haynes, 1995). It may be assumed, then, that in the future, United States school children will have increased contact and exposure to peers who are culturally different from themselves. These changes in cultural composition suggest the need for education in cultural awareness to develop intercultural competence.

Spitzberg (1991) states that the development of "increased intercultural sensitivity (ICS) has the potential to aid a young person's intercultural competence" (p. 345). Spitzberg suggests that increased development in ICS can assist people in perceiving effective and appropriate behavior within a given context. Within the institution of education, Grant and Haynes (1995) state, "To improve cultural relations, students and teachers must become not only culturally sensitive but also competent in cross-cultural interaction" (p. 171). Before sound educational programs can be developed, however, we need to develop a better understanding of cultural sensitivity among children.

Presently, little is known about the scope of intercultural sensitivity among early adolescents. The purpose of this study is to describe the range of intercultural sensitivity in a small sample of seventh grade students. The study is designed to examine the range of intercultural

sensitivity and salient factors associated with it. Specifically, the study seeks to clarify our understanding of relationships that may exist between empathy, authoritarianism, gender, intercultural contact, second language acquisition and early adolescents' ICS levels. Intercultural sensitivity is defined as "the way people construe cultural difference and in the varying kinds of experience that accompany different constructions" (Bennett, 1993, p. 24). This study analyzes ICS among young adolescents based upon Bennett's Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (Bennett, 1986,1993).

Bennett presents a developmental model of the growth of ICS in individuals and suggests that a person moves through various stages developing from a monocultural perspective to an intercultural world view. Within each stage Bennett identifies various strategies that individuals may employ to comprehend interactions with "the other" (see Figure 1). Bennett (1993) defines a monocultural perspective as "assuming that the worldview of one's own culture is central to all reality" (p. 30). In contrast, an intercultural perspective is defined as "the acceptance of, adaptation to and integration of cultural differences" (Paige, 1993, p. 16). The two categories differ in how the concept of difference is understood. In the monocultural category, difference is understood--either consciously or unconsciously--as a threat, whereas in the intercultural category difference is assumed to be nonthreatening--perhaps stimulating and even desirable. Each category is further subdivided into stages or ways in which an individual addresses cultural difference. The monocultural stages are: avoidance, protection, reversal and minimization. The intercultural stages are acceptance, adaptation, evaluation, and marginality. Each stage is further subdivided into strategies (e.g., isolation and separation are strategies used by individuals in the avoidance stage).

The model is phenomenological in that it "describes a learner's subjective experience of culture difference, not just the objective behavior of either learner or trainer" (Bennett, 1993, p. 22). Bennett (1986) justifies this approach by explaining that people do not respond to an incident, rather individuals respond to the significance they attach to the event. Therefore, it is possible that an incident may prompt various reactions depending upon who the observer is. Furthermore, people can experience the same event yet interpret the action at different levels.

A review of the literature discloses little existing theoretical and empirical evidence regarding ICS and the early adolescent. Research suggests, however, several concepts associated with ICS level among adults. It may prove fruitful, then, to explore these concepts among young

adolescents. ICS falls under the broader domain of intercultural communication (i.e., the appropriateness and effectiveness of a communication exchange between people from different cultures). Extensive research in the field of intercultural communication suggests a strong positive association between empathy and successful intercultural communication (Abe & Wiseman, 1983; Bhawuk & Brislin, 1992; Broome, 1991; Chen, 1989; Cui & Awa, 1992; Gudykunst & Hammer, 1984; Hammer, 1987; Hammer, Nishida, & Wiseman, 1996; Hannigan, 1990; Spitzberg, 1989; Stefani, 1995; Taylor, 1994). On the other hand, some research suggests a negative association between authoritarianism and ICS level (Mischel, 1965). Authoritarian personalities tend to be ethnocentric and lack empathy toward others (Adorno, Frenkel-Brunswik, Levinson, & Sanford, 1950; Altemeyer, 1981, 1988, 1996). Likewise sex, gender and minority status appear to influence an individual's empathy level (Cross & Markus, 1993; Cohen & Strayer, 1996; Eder, Evans, & Parker, 1995; Hanson & Mullis, 1985; Roberts & Strayer, 1996; Vogel, 1994). Brief or long-term intercultural contact also appears to have the potential to positively influence ICS level (Ben-Ari & Amir, 1988; Fisher & Price, 1991; Horenczk & Bekerman, 1997; Ichilov & Shacham, 1984; Mitchell, 1995; Schofield, 1989). Formal language training may positively influence an individual's ICS level, however, the research is not conclusive on this issue (Bhawuk & Brislin, 1992; Stitsworth, 1987). These variables, then, appear worthy of exploration.

Method

This descriptive and exploratory study utilized qualitative and quantitative data collection. A multimethodological approach was chosen based upon the assumption that no single method is comprehensive. Miles and Huberman (1994) posit, "qualitative data are useful when one needs to supplement, validate, explain, illuminate, or reinterpret quantitative data gathered from the same setting" (p. 10). Thus, the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI) was designed to quantitatively measure the participants' ICS. The written survey questionnaire provided the researcher with demographic, experiential and attitudinal data. The purpose of the standardized open-ended interviews was to validate the quantitative measures by inviting a select group of participants to share their views and perception of "the other" without the restrictions of a limited response paper-pencil instrument. Thus, data from the informal interviews provided additional content validity to the survey findings.

Sample

Participants of this study were members of 6 seventh grade social studies classes from three schools located in three school districts (i.e., rural, suburban and urban locales) in a north-central state. These districts were chosen to allow exploration of ICS among the same aged students with varying degrees of exposure to multiple cultures. Thus, purposive sampling was utilized in the selection of school districts. To increase generalizability, simple random sampling was employed to select a middle school or junior high school within the targeted school districts. Within each school, a volunteer teacher agreed to have two classes, randomly selected, complete the survey. One hundred and forty-five students participated in the study (see Appendix A for additional demographic information).

Measures

In the present study both quantitative and qualitative instrumentation was used. Intercultural sensitivity was assessed by a modified version of the (IDI). Several other standardized measures and researcher generated questions were employed to collect data on possible correlates and predictors of ICS.

The Early Adolescent Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI). This scale is a modified version of the IDI developed by Hammer and Bennett (Hammer, in press). The adult IDI is a 70-item paper-pencil instrument. Reliability of all subscales was .70 or above. The modified inventory contains 40 items; the eight stages outlined in Bennett's conceptual model are each represented by five statements (i.e., 5 statements x 8 stages = 40 items). The respondents indicated the strength of their disagreement or agreement with each statement using a five-point Likert scale response format. Items were selected from the 70-item IDI based upon analysis of a pilot study. Some of the item statements were slightly modified. For example, to better reflect the experience of seventh graders, the statement "I have lost all respect for the culture in which I was raised" was modified to "I do not respect the culture that I am being raised in." The inventory yields scores for each of the eight stages. Each score is the average of the five responses to the statements for a stage. The respondents' overall IDI score is the weighted mean of the eight stage scores. Hence, overall scores range from one to eight. A Cronbach alpha statistic reflected a reliability score on each subscale (i.e., avoidance = .78, protection = .71, reversal = .67, minimization = .57, acceptance = .42, adaptation = .64, evaluation = .51, marginality = .79).

Bem's Sex Role Inventory (BSRI). The BSRI (short form) was designed to identify four groups of sex-typed individuals: feminine, masculine, androgynous and undifferentiated (Bem, 1981). The short form consists of a 30-item paper-and-pencil inventory. Reliability for both the masculine and feminine subscales was high (<.80). The BSRI is based upon two theoretical assumptions. First, two distinct sex-role categories (i.e., masculine and feminine) exist within the United States culture and the attributes and norms for membership into these categories are well known by almost all people. Second, people adopt these attributes and norms in varying degrees. For example, the sex-typed person who adopts masculine behaviors and is motivated to act in such a manner is highly attuned to culturally defined sex-roles. On the other hand, an androgynous individual is less influenced by culturally defined sex-roles and is less likely to modify his or her behavior according to societal expectations. Androgynous individuals possess a cognitive flexibility that allows them to adapt their behavior with respect to context (Bem, 1984). Bennett (1993) suggests that cognitive flexibility is an important skill possessed by individuals with high levels of ICS.

The BSRI yields a masculine and a feminine score. These scores are then plotted and place an individual in one of the four gender orientation categories (i.e., masculine, feminine, androgynous, undifferientated). A Cronbach alpha statistic revealed a reliability of .87 for the feminine subscale and a .76 for the masculine subscale for the respondents in this study.

Bryant's Empathy Index. First published in 1982, the Bryant Empathy Index is based on the paper-and-pencil Mehrabian and Epstein (1972) adult measure of emotional empathy. Extensive reliability and validity checks on the Bryant Empathy Index have been conducted. Internal reliability was assessed utilizing a Cronbach alpha statistic (.79); test-retest measures reflected an external reliability of .83. Convergent validity for the seventh grade sample was assessed by correlating the adapted empathy measure with the Mehrabian and Epstein (1972) measure ($p < .001$). Of particular interest to the present study, Bryant tested the theoretical construct of acceptance of difference (operationalized as the physical proximity children would allow other various children to be next to them) and empathy and found higher empathy scores were associated with a decrease in physical proximity (-.43, $p < .001$). Statements in this 22-item inventory include "I get upset when I see an animal begin hurt." and "Kids who have no friends probably don't want any." Utilizing a five-point Likert-type response format the index yields a

score that may range from 22 to 110. The higher the score, the greater the empathy. A Cronbach alpha statistic revealed a reliability of .79 for this sample.

Altemeyer's Adapted Authoritarian Scale. This eight-item scale is based on Altemeyer's (1988) 30-item Right Wing Authoritarian Scale (RWA). The RWA has been extensively tested with students and adults and judged highly reliable (< .85). This scale was originally adapted by Thalhammer, Wood, Bird, Avery and Sullivan (1994) for use with ninth grade United States students. The scale measured an acceptable reliability with this group (.59). The scale yields a score between 8-40. The higher the score, the more authoritarian the individual. Statements from this scales include "To keep society orderly, we all must obey the police." and "In this world, you have to fight for what you want. Compromise is really the same thing as losing." In this study, results from this scale should be cautiously accepted because internal reliability was relatively low (.40).

Researcher Generated Questions. In addition to completing the previous instruments, all respondents completed 18 researcher-generated items related to specific demographic and experiential factors which may influence a student's ICS. Questions pertaining to experiential factors emerged from a review of the literature. For example, to assess intercultural friendships the participants responded using a five-point Likert response format to the statement "My closest friends are the same ethnic background as I."

Open-Ended Interviews. In order develop a fuller understanding and validate the quantitative measure, 19 "structured" open-ended interviews were conducted. An open-ended interview "focuses on a respondent's subjective responses to a known situation in which she has been involved and which has been analyzed by the interviewer prior to the interview" (Cohen & Manion, 1994, p. 273). In the present study, the participants' extreme (i.e., high or low) score on the IDI was the major criteria for interview selection.

The interview consisted of two parts and lasted between 15 and 25 minutes. The first part of the interview included 10 carefully worded questions arranged in a sequence. The purpose of these questions was to probe the participants to explain and expand upon ideas put forth in the paper-and-pencil instrument. For example, the question "In your own words, can you tell me what the term 'ethnic group' means?" allowed the investigator to understand the interviewee's personal definition of the term "ethnic group." Once a definition was established, the investigator

probed deeper, asked for examples, and finally asked "Do you have friends or relatives that you would consider to be from a different cultural or ethnic group? If so, can you describe how they are different from you?" The participant's answer, in conjunction with data collected by other measures, yielded a clearer understanding of that individual's conception of cultural difference.

In the second part of the interview, the participants were asked to answer two questions relating to a critical incident created by Brislin, Cushner, and Yong (1996, p. 82). Grounded in attribution theory, critical incidents are a common strategy employed in intercultural communication training. Traditionally, this training technique asks participant to read short vignettes (i.e., critical incidents) in which a problem or misunderstanding rooted in a cultural difference is described. The participant is then asked to choose one of four explanations (i.e., attributions) which explain the cultural misunderstanding. The critical incidents written by Brislin et al. were judged highly reliable and valid by intercultural experts (for additional description of the validation and reliability process see Brislin et al., 1996).

For the present study, ICC training was not a goal; rather, the purpose was to more fully understand how early adolescents understand cultural difference. The researcher decided that the narrative nature of a critical incident would work as excellent stimulus material for this age group. Therefore, an appropriate critical incident was chosen. The critical incident centered around the problem of a young teen-aged girl and was "cultural general" in focus (i.e., a misunderstanding not rooted in the norms of any specific culture). In this study, instead of providing the participants with prescribed attributions, as Brislin et al. do, the respondents were asked to explain, in their own words, why a cultural misunderstanding occurred. This was done so that the investigator could probe for a clearer understanding of the participants' perception of cultural difference.

Procedure

A pilot study checked the clarity of the instruments, established the needed time for the survey and the most effective method of administration.

The final survey was administered to two seventh grade class sections in each of the targeted schools during late March and early April of 1997. The administration of the survey took approximately 45 minutes (i.e., one class period).

The 145 students who chose to participate in this study completed a survey. This survey consisted of the modified IDI, the BSRI (short form), Bryant's Empathy Index, Altemeyer's

Adapted Authoritarianism Scale and the researcher generated questions (i.e., questions related to intercultural contact, second language acquisition and demographic information). The IDI statements and the BSRI words were read aloud to the students. All other survey questions were completed by the participants silently.

After the statistical range of the students was computed, standardized open-ended interviews of 19 participants were conducted in May of 1997. Within each subsample six participants identified as possessing high ICS and six participants identified as possessing low ICS were invited to an interview (i.e., a total of 36 students). The number of interviews varied at each locale because some students did not wish to be interviewed or neglected to return the required consent form (i.e., 17 students did not wish to participate in the interview). Therefore, eight interviews were conducted with participants from the urban middle school, six interviews were held at the rural junior high school and five interviews were conducted at the suburban locale. The interviews were audio-taped and transcribed verbatim.

Analysis

Quantitative Analysis

The primary objective of the present study is to describe the range of ICS among seventh graders. In order to accomplish this, frequency tables, percentages, means and standard deviations were calculated from each student's IDI scores. Histograms and interaction plots were developed and utilized to complete the exploratory data analysis. A 2X3 analysis of variance was calculated for the IDI score using the factors gender and location in order to check for interaction.

In order to the analyze the possible associations between other factors and ICS level t-tests, analysis of variances and simple correlations were computed. Next, a multiple linear regression statistic between IDI score and all statistically significant variables was run.

Qualitative Analysis

The 19 interviews were analyzed following the inductive analysis process outlined by Patton (1980). An analyst-constructed typology was created to reflect distinct categories. Systematic categories were created following Guba's (1978) format. The researcher looked for "recurring regularities" in the data that represented patterns that then were used to form categories. Categories were judged by two criteria: 1) internal homogeneity (i.e., How do the data in a category hold together?), and 2) external heterogeneity (i.e., How clearly separate and defined is

each category?). Further data analysis was conducted through the employment of a cross-classification matrix. This process, described by Patton (1980), involved the researcher crossing the various dimensions with the hope of generating new insights or typologies for further exploration.

After completing the quantitative and qualitative analysis, the results were compared.

Results

The Range of ICS Among Early Adolescents

The most significant finding to emerge from this study is that approximately one half of the early adolescents viewed the "other" from a monocultural vantage and the other half viewed those culturally different from themselves from an intercultural perspective. According to Bennett's Developmental Model of ICS most students were located in the stages of minimization and acceptance (see Figure 1). The sample scores reveal an approximately normal distribution with a mean of 4.9 and a standard deviation of 0.4. (see Table 1).

An analysis of the interviews also seems to reflect this spread. For example, several adolescents who had lower IDI scores expressed caution and little desire to associate with people they considered culturally different. Lily,[1] an European American girl from a small town, shared that she only had friends "like" her and it was best to live next to people that were the "same" because then there would be less fighting. Maria,[2] a girl of Hispanic origin, relayed that life would be much less violent if people lived with their "own kind." Part of her fear may be rooted in past experience. When asked why she was of this opinion Maria shared this story, "Me and my friend were walking to the store--some black people came and started to mess with us and I started running and my cousin [i.e., friend] stayed there and they got in a fight and now my cousin is in the hospital...she got shot." Yet, Maria's feelings about and relations with "the other" were not simplistic; later in the interview Maria described close friendships with both European and African American girls. These friends were special because, "they are friendly...they don't mess with you....they don't fight with you or nothing like that." So it appears that Maria's lack of intercultural sensitivity may be rooted in feeling threatened by those who are culturally different and violent exchanges that she and persons close to her have experienced.

Seventh graders who had higher IDI scores, on the other hand, expressed a curiosity and desire to know more about others that they considered culturally different. Angelina, a 13-year-old European American girl who lives in a suburb, had a very positive view of "the other." She stated:

> Oh, I think it is kind'a neat to have people--like in my family--to be from different things [cultures] and hear their stories and how they do it--and sometimes I wish that I could do it that way too. If sounds funner [sic]. Like my great uncle and aunt...they have different colored skin and my aunt covers her face all over and my great uncle wears those little hats like if you are Jewish or something.

In addition, this group also reflected an awareness and respect for difference. Fatisha, a bubbly 13-year-old girl, talked about the importance of being sensitive and not offending those that were different out of ignorance. She explained:

> ...sometimes people have to be careful as to what they say to other people because they think you might be saying a wrong thing...like when we were living in the projects up here--the Hmong people--we might say that they are Chinese 'cause we didn't know what they were and they might get offended and then they call us niggers....You have to be careful about what you say to other people and what you do.

Fatisha went on to say that she had many friends from different cultures and that she enjoyed going to their homes, eating their unusual foods and learning about their customs. In sum, then, although information gleaned from the interviews can not be generalized to the larger population, it nonetheless lends support to the quantitative data; students with lower IDI scores were less accepting and interested in learning about people from other cultures than students who received higher IDI scores.

Predictors of ICS

Quantitative data analysis revealed variables which may predict ICS in this sample (see Table 2). First, students' ICS levels were affected by the extent of intercultural relationships they experienced. That is, children who reported to have more friends that were of different cultural or ethnic backgrounds than themselves and that enjoyed talking with people who were culturally different from themselves received higher IDI scores ($B = 0.23$, $p = 0.01$). Furthermore, the results from a multiple linear regression reveal that when all other explanatory variables are held

constant, intercultural relationships (i.e., operationalized as intercultural friendships and interest in talking with people from different cultures) is a statistically significant predictor of ICS level (i.e., for boys, $B = 0.22$; for girls, $B = 0.12$; $p < 0.01$).

The interviews with 19 students also provide us with a clearer understanding of the significance of various intercultural influences. Nine interviews with students who scored above the IDI mean score (i.e., 4.9) and 10 interviews with students who scored below the IDI mean score from the three locations were separately analyzed. In general, different attitudes toward living and interacting with different cultural groups emerged. Of the students who scored above the mean on the IDI, all relayed that they wanted to live in a culturally diverse neighborhood. Many of the students suggested that it was more interesting to live next door to people who were culturally different and by doing so they would be better prepared to live as adults in a multicultural world. For example, Tamara, a young urban African American, stated that she liked to live "mixed" because then people, "talk with each other--not just in your same culture--and share different stuff...we can learn together and like to like each other." Angelina, an European American, explained, "I think that people should be able to learn about other ethnic groups--you know to just be around them--and hear about them and be able to interact with them."

The rural students did not have the same opportunities to experience cultural diversity as did the suburban and urban students. Those rural students, however, who had higher IDI scores generally expressed a desire to have intercultural experiences, and were curious to have more intercultural interactions. These children, however, tended to view intercultural exchanges as "adventures" with a non-Americans. John, a blonde, blue-eyed European American boy who lives on a farm, described his frequent airplane trips to Colorado:

> ...I have been there eight times...every time I have sat by someone from a different ethnic group on the plane so they talk about their country and stuff. One time I sat by this guy from Finland and he was just learning to speak English--we were talking for the entire two hour trip! It was pretty cool..."

Elizabeth, an European American girl who also lives on a farm, shared her desire to live in another culture:

> We are so used to living in America and having everything that we want--but we don't go to those places...and actually experience things... and see them. I

would like to be a foreign exchange student--that would be so neat....[I would like] to go to the Middle East and see what is going on there. You watch the news but it's really confusing. You really don't know what is going on."

In contrast to the rural students, the urban and suburban students interacted daily with people from different cultures.

When queried about how their friends from other cultures were different from them, the urban students sometimes acknowledged difference beyond the superficial level. For example, Anisha, an African American stated, "sometimes maybe points of view we have [differ]--just because of the way that we were brought up." In general, then, the data from the nine students who had high IDI scores reflected a positive and inquisitive attitude about cultural difference and a somewhat sophisticated level of understanding as to why that difference may occur. On the other hand, the 10 interviews with the students who scored in the lowest sector of their subsamples reveal more hesitant and suspicious attitudes about intercultural contact.

Of these 10 students, five said that they did not want to live in a culturally diverse neighborhood. These students had some difficulty explaining why. One, a rural European American farm boy, acknowledged that he wanted only to live with his animals and not be "bothered" by others. Three other students, one from each location, reflected that if people lived separately there probably would be less fighting and violence. Roberto, a Hispanic child of El Salvadorian and Mexican lineage, said that the best place he could imagine living would be in Mexico where he would be like everyone else. Many of these seventh graders shared that the majority of their friends were of the same race and cultural background as were they. Most, however, explained that they had some friends from other cultural groups. Unlike the higher scoring IDI interviewees, these students did not appear to have as many intercultural relationships nor did they seem interested in developing more multicultural links. In sum, then, the analysis of the qualitative data tends to support the quantitative data analysis; intercultural relationships are positively associated with ICS level.

Second, seventh graders in this study who were categorized as androgynous ($n = 22$) reported statistically significant greater levels of ICS than those students ($n = 79$) who were classified as masculine, feminine or undifferentiated ($p = 0.02$). That is, boys and girls who identified strongly with both masculine and feminine traits reported higher IDI scores. The

multiple linear regression analysis suggests that androgyny is also a statistically significant predictor of ICS level ($B = 0.21$, $p = 0.01$).

Four of the 19 students interviewed were categorized as androgynous; two were boys and two were girls. All had relatively high IDI scores, ranging from 5.3 to 5.7. All four children expressed an eagerness and openness to learning about the "other." For example, their adventuresome spirits were revealed when asked where they would like to go on a holiday. John, a European American, is already planning a trip to Russia with a church group when he is 16. Jane, a suburban European American, wants to go to Africa, "because it is a really neat place--you can see how they all get along-and what it is like there...see what they do--how they are all mixed together."

Three of the four students talked about their intercultural friendships. Emma, a European American, was the only person interviewed from the rural locale who discussed her friendships with Mexican Americans. She explained:

> they do the same things [as me], but they are different...[they are a] different color--they might have a different background from me...[but I like them] because they are funny---they live in town so I get to see them a lot and we go to the same school.

Shawn, an African American boy, revealed his flexibility when he stated that he enjoyed having friends from other cultures, "cause it is fun--'cause when I stay over at their house I get to eat a little bit of what they eat all the time." Although the results are not generalizable, the four androgynous children interviewed in this study seem to have flexible and curious attitudes about learning and interacting with those who are culturally different.

Third, an analysis of variance of the mean IDI score by location indicated a statistically significant difference in the IDI scores ($p = 0.03$). Scheffe post hoc statistics suggest that there is a statistically significant difference between the rural and suburban subsamples ($p = 0.05$) but not between the urban and rural or the urban and suburban subsamples.

Qualitative data analysis further illuminate this finding and suggest the manner in which seventh graders perceived ICS varied across the three locales. The rural students, who had little exposure to the "other," viewed intercultural experiences as something novel and distant from their daily lives. For example, several interviewees mention their desire to become foreign exchange

students. Urban students who were submerged in a multicultural environment, however, held a dichotomous perspective of intercultural interaction. At the interpersonal level, they enjoyed having friends that were culturally different from themselves. At another level, the impersonal (i.e., the society in general), the urban students reflected fearful and suspicious attitudes of the "other." The suburban students held a pragmatic view. These seventh graders appeared to accept that their world was becoming increasingly multicultural and they simply accepted that fact.

Fourth, according to a Pearson correlation statistic, neither minority status ($p = 0.71$), nor second language acquisition ($p = 0.52$) are statistically significant factors associated with increased ICS levels. Likewise, sex was only of borderline statistical significance ($p = 0.06$). Data analysis gleaned from the 19 interviews generally tend to support the quantitative findings. For example, all 19 students interviewed were interested in studying a foreign language (i.e., children with both high and low IDI scores expressed interest in learning foreign languages). Generally, however, these students did not equate the learning of a language with the development of intercultural understanding.

Constructs of ICS

Empathy scores for the respondents ($N = 125$) ranged from 43 to 101 (only fully completed IDIs were used in the statistical analysis). The sample scores reveal an approximately normal distribution with a mean of 75 and a standard deviation of 11.6. The Pearson correlation coefficient reveals a positive and highly significant relationship between empathy and IDI score ($r = 0.40$, $p = 0.0001$). Thus, when a child's empathy score was high so was his or her IDI score. This reinforces prior theoretical literature which suggests that empathy may be a construct of ICS (Bennett, 1986, 1993).

Authoritarian scores for the respondents ($N = 116$) ranged from 6-25. The sample scores reveal an approximately normal distribution with a mean of 16 and a standard deviation of 3.5. The Pearson correlation coefficient revealed a statistically significant negative relationship between authoritarianism and ICS score ($r = -0.24$, $p = 0.008$). Thus, generally speaking, children who reflected inflexible and conventional attitudes generally received lower IDI scores. A statistically significant negative relationship between empathy score and authoritarianism score was also noted ($N = 116$, $r = -0.30$, $p = 0.001$). These results must be considered with reservation as the internal reliability of

Altemeyer's Adapted Authoritarian Scale is low. In addition, only two students with high authoritarian scores were interviewed and analysis of these interviews is inconclusive with respect to the relationship between authoritarianism and ICS.

Discussion

This study was designed to explore and describe the range of ICS among a small sample of seventh grade students and to examine important factors associated with it. Results indicate that the seventh grade students in this study were almost equally divided between the monocultural and intercultural categories on Bennett's Developmental Model of ICS. Specifically, most children fell into the latter stage of minimization or the early stage of acceptance. No students were located in the monocultural stages of avoidance or protection or in the intercultural stages of adaptation, evaluation, and marginality. Intercultural friendships, gender orientation and locale appeared as salient predictors of ICS level. In addition, a statistically significant positive association existed between empathy and ICS and a statistically significant negative relationship between ICS and authoritarianism was noted.

Considering These Findings in Light of Past Research

These findings should be understood and interpreted within the context of existing research (Cohen & Manion, 1994). One major finding of this study is that, among this sample, approximately one half of the students demonstrated a monocultural world view while the other one half envisioned cultural difference from an intercultural perspective. One element identified as significant for the development of intercultural communication is perspective taking ability (Abe & Wiseman, 1983; Gudykunst & Hammer, 1984; Gudykunst, Wiseman, & Hammer, 1977). More specifically, perspective taking is essential for the development of Bennett's intercultural stages (Bennett, 1993). Between the ages 9 to 15 children acquire the skill of third-person perspective taking (Selman & Schultz, 1990). In this study, quantitative and qualitative data analysis suggest that the respondents demonstrating ICS in the intercultural stage of acceptance had developed this skill. One reason that some respondents may have demonstrated a monocultural world view is that they may not have developed the cognitive ability which would allow them to take a third-person perspective. Other factors or a constellation of factors may influence an individual's ICS (e.g., exposure to the "other," context of the interaction with the "other," and support for ICS by authority figures).

A second finding of this study is the existence of a strong positive relationship between the amount of intercultural friendships early adolescents claim and their respective ICS level. This finding supports past research that has identified the ability of establishing interpersonal relationships as an important element of ICC (Hammer, Gudykunst, & Wiseman, 1978; Abe & Wiseman, 1983). On the other hand, this finding is in direct contrast with the ICS research of Bhawuk and Brislin (1992). These researchers found no statistically significant relationship between number of intercultural friendships and ICS. It should be noted that both studies (i.e., this study and the Bhawuk and Brislin study) utilized the self-report method to obtain information on this variable. One weakness of this method is that it does not tell the researcher how the concept "friendship" was interpreted by the respondents. This may be salient, as research by Selman and Schultz (1990) suggest that the concept of friendship is developmental and people's perspectives on friendship change with age and maturation. Therefore, the survey results do not illuminate our understanding of the respondents' perception of "friendship." Because the respondents in the Brislin and Bhawuk study were young adults, it is possible that their conception of friendship differed from the early adolescents of this study.

This study, however, goes beyond the self-report method and explores the concept of intercultural friendship further in the 19 follow-up interviews. Specifically, the questions: "Do you have friends or relatives--cousins, aunts, uncles, etcetera that you would consider from a different cultural or ethnic group?" "Can you describe how they are different from you?" and "Describe a perfect best friend." addressed this issue. Analysis of the qualitative data suggests support for the quantitative findings. That is, children who reported high ICS expressed an enjoyment with their intercultural friendships and were curious to know more about the "other." On the other hand, the students who demonstrated low ICS expressed, in general, a hesitant and suspicious attitude towards those identified as culturally different.

Based upon past research, it is not too surprising to find that many early adolescents do not wish to interact and form relationships with the "other" and sometimes feel pressure from their cultural in-group to segregate from those considered culturally different. Research conducted with children of this age suggests that young adolescents demonstrate more attachment to their own ethnic or racial group than peers who are culturally different (Hartup, 1992; Grant & Millar, 1992; Schofield, 1989, 1995a, 1995b). This phenomena appears to hold for older adolescents as well.

Gudykunst and Shapiro (1996) found college students more satisfied and less anxious with interethnic conversation, and Marharaj and Connolly (1994) found that, although senior high school students did not necessarily hold negative views of the "other," they preferred to socialize intraethnically. Thus, this finding supports Bennett's (1993) notion that communication across cultures is not natural, but rather developmental in nature. This finding holds special importance for early adolescents when it is juxtaposed with recent research that suggests intercultural (i.e., defined as interracial) contact in schools and neighborhoods during childhood may diminish negative racial stereotypes and have a lasting effect on levels of adult prejudice (Wood & Sonleitner, 1996).

A third important finding of this study is the strong positive relationship that exists between androgyny and ICS. The findings of this study suggest support for Paulsen's (1995) research which found that individuals who are androgynous may have less difficulty interacting with persons who are culturally different. Although this study does not claim to analyze the actions of the respondents, androgynous children in this study did report greater levels of ICS. If, as Bem (1975) claims, androgynous individuals have greater cognitive flexibility and possess the ability to adapt behavior, vis-a-vis the context, then it might be assumed that these skills, at some level, are activated when interacting with the "other."

A fourth important finding is the relationship between location and ICS. Suburban students were found to have significantly greater ICS than rural or urban students. The various locations in this study were purposively chosen because exposure to the "other" varied across the three locales. Research by Martin and Hammer (1989), which found that people with little or no ICC experience viewed intercultural exchanges differently from those with more ICC experience, may aid us in understanding the lower IDI mean scores reported by the rural subsample. These respondents reported the least exposure and interaction with the "other." Analysis of the qualitative data suggest that these students interpret and perceive intercultural exchange differently than those respondents from urban and suburban locales. That is, many of the students interviewed from the rural subsample shared intercultural experiences that were of a superficial nature and viewed intercultural interaction as "exotic" and with "foreigners." This finding also dovetails with research by Wiseman, Hammer and Nishida (1989), which found that high levels of ethnocentrism (i.e., a monocultural worldview) were associated with less cultural-general understanding. Hence,

because the rural students had fewer intercultural experiences, these children perhaps did not possess a highly developed ICS schemata and therefore processed and understood intercultural experience differently than those students who experience daily intercultural exchanges.

Likewise, the urban seventh graders also demonstrated a significantly lower ICS than the suburban students. Unlike the rural subsample, intercultural exchange was ubiquitous in the lives of these students. One might expect that these students would demonstrate high levels of ICS. This was not the case. Unlike the rural students who described an "exotic" view of intercultural experiences; urban students often described intercultural interactions of a more fearful and violent nature. It appears, then, that intercultural contact may be a necessary but not sufficient factor which encourages high levels of ICS. Within the field of intercultural communication, recent research by Hammer, Nishida and Wiseman (1996) and Mitchell (1995) suggests that context or situation may significantly influence an individual's ICC ability. Within the educational setting, Schofield (1989; 1995a; 1995b) and Slavin (1995) suggest context should be taken into consideration when individuals from two cultures interact. This supports Allport's (1986/1954) contact hypothesis and the work of Amir (1969) which outline specific conditions that encourage positive intercultural interaction (see Appendix B). This finding may not be surprising in light of earlier research by Dash and Niemi (1992) which found urban teens significantly less tolerant of divergent cultural perspectives than suburban teens. Also, these researchers found African American teens not always supportive of greater acceptance of culture diversity.[3] Although urban teens have the most contact with those considered culturally different, other factors may interact to lower their level of ICS.

Another explanation as to why the ICS levels of the three subsamples differed may involve the varying levels of support for ICS provided by each school. The suburban school was the only school which offered a quarter-length course in conflict resolution to all seventh graders and which employed two full time and one part time minority advocates to work as liaisons between the faculty, staff, administration and the minority students and their families. Also, the suburban social studies classroom was distinct from the other two classrooms in that the walls were filled with posters and sayings which celebrated diversity. Consequently, the school ethos (i.e., written and hidden curriculum) may have an impact upon early adolescents' ICS level.

Fifth, this study reconfirms past research identifying the strong positive association between empathy and ICC (Abe & Wiseman, 1983; Bhawuk & Brislin, 1992; Broome, 1991; Chen, 1989; Cui & Awa, 1992; Gudykunst & Hammer, 1984; Hammer, 1987; Hammer, Nishida, & Wiseman, 1996; Hannigan, 1990; Spitzberg, 1989; Stefani, 1995; Taylor, 1994). More specifically, this study extends the ICC research to link empathy with ICS. This finding empirically supports Bennett's theoretical argument that suggests empathy may be an important element of ICS.

Sixth, this study reconfirms past research which suggests that authoritarian individuals are more ethnocentric (i.e., monocultural), and demonstrate less empathy toward the "other" (Adelson, 1971, Adorno, 1950; Altemeyer, 1981, 1988, 1996). In addition, the findings support Bennett's theoretical argument which suggests that a person who demonstrates high levels of ICS demonstrates the opposite traits of an authoritarian personality. That is, individuals who are interculturally sensitive exhibit flexible thinking patterns and empathic responses as opposed to rigid stereotyping and nonempathic reasoning.

Strengths and Limitations of the Study

Strengths. Four strengths are most notable in this study. First, and perhaps most important, methodological triangulation, as opposed to a single method approach, allowed for a more complete exploration of ICS among the sample. The design of this study addresses a recent call by Martin (1993) to be more inclusive of various research paradigms within the field of ICC.

Second, the findings of this study provide empirical support for the explanatory power of Bennett's theoretical Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity in two new areas. First, according to the extensive literature reviewed, intercultural sensitivity among early adolescents has not previously been examined. Second, Bennett's theoretical model of the development of ICS has not been empirically tested within an intranational context. The findings of this exploratory and descriptive study provide initial empirical support for the Bennett model of ICS.

Third, this study utilized a recently developed instrument, the IDI, with a new age group (i.e., early adolescents). The literature review indicates that the IDI has been used exclusively with older adolescents and adults. Thus, by expanding the use of the IDI to a younger population, teachers and practitioners have a new instrument to assess ICS among early adolescents.

Fourth, and last, seventh graders living in three very different environments with varying

exposure to intercultural contact were targeted as participants for this study (i.e., rural, suburban and urban locales). Children from the rural locale were culturally the most homogeneous (i.e., 94% European American) and reported limited interaction with culture difference. The suburban subsample of students were moderately diverse (i.e., 66% European American) and, within the school setting, interacted with cultural difference on a daily basis. The majority of the urban children were of minority status (7% European American). These children reported a high degree of interaction daily with those they considered culturally different. Therefore, although the children were similar in age, their exposure to cultural difference varied greatly. Thus, by exploring ICS among these three subsamples, a broader perspective of ICS among this age group was achieved. We now turn to a discussion of the limitations of this study.

Limitations. First, because of the marginal alpha levels in the subscales of acceptance and contextual evaluation of the modified IDI, the quantitative findings for these two subscales should be interpreted cautiously. The qualitative data, however, provide additional support for the reliability of the subscale acceptance. Nine students were interviewed who had IDI scores which placed them in the stage of acceptance. High levels of acknowledgement and respect for both culturally different behaviors and beliefs generally emerged from the qualitative data analysis of the nine interviews. This lends support to the quantitative reliability of the acceptance subscale. No students, however, were categorized in the evaluation stage and thus, the qualitative data analysis did not confirm or disconfirm the reliability of this subscale.

Second, the findings of this study can not be generalized beyond this sample. Random sampling was used when plausible (e.g., in the selection of the school within the district). Purposive sampling, however, was used in targeting the school district, class and the children interviewed. Therefore, no claim may be made that the findings from this study hold for early adolescents in different settings.

Third, the findings of this study do not suggest that a causal link exists between empathy, authoritarianism, intercultural friendships, gender, sex, or location and the phenomena of ICS. In other words, the findings identify certain positive or negative relationships; however, the findings do not imply that a specific variable or a constellation of variables "make" an early adolescent interculturally sensitive. The findings, therefore, do not explain why some young adolescents are more interculturally sensitive than others, nor do they attest to the stability of the participants' ICS.

Fourth, given the nature of the study, the findings do not claim that seventh grade students who report greater ICS act with more intercultural sensitivity to the "other" than those who report less ICS. That is, the research does not suggest that thought translates into action.

Implications for Social Studies Educators

The responsibility of the development of ICS is not the raison de-tre of any specific discipline, nor is the development of ICS presently allocated to any one field of study. The development of ICS, however, is inclusive of a vision of social studies education which calls for assisting students to "construct a pluralist perspective based on diversity....[which] involves respect for differences of opinion and preference; of race, religion, and gender; of class and ethnicity; and of culture in general" (National Council for the Social Studies, 1994, p. 6). In addition, Arthur Ellis (1995, p. 4), a noted social studies educator, identifies the promotion "in learners [of] an understanding and acceptance of other people with different values and life-styles" as one of eleven fundamental concerns of the social studies. The challenge for social studies educators is not only to maximize the intellectual potential of their charges but also to develop students' affective and behavioral traits. The development of ICS, therefore, lies within the domain of the social studies. What, then, are the implications of this study for the field of education, in general, and social studies educators, in particular?

One of the most important findings of this study is that, in this difficult age of transition from childhood to adolescence, many youth have already reached relatively sophisticated levels of ICS. This knowledge should encourage educators to develop curriculum and instructional strategies which will enhance ICS levels among this age group. There are several ways to go about this task.

First, social studies teachers should actively encourage intercultural friendship. Several caveats are in order, though. Educators must structure intercultural contact adhering to Amir's (1969) conditions (see Appendix B). If not structured properly, contact may not necessarily promote greater levels of ICS among the students. Rather, poorly designed programs may reinforce stereotypes and exacerbate intercultural tensions between groups (Schofield, 1989, 1995a,1995b). Educators should also bear in mind that children do not always feel comfortable with those who are culturally different and that in-group/out-group formations are natural and basic to a person's self esteem (Allport, 1986/1954). However, as individuals develop ICS they have

less rigid stereotypes, less clear boundaries, and utilize multiple perspectives to analyze situations (Bennett, 1993).

In a similar vein, social studies educators need to critically evaluate the formal curriculum. For example, requiring all students to enroll in a "culture" class will not insure a greater sensitivity to those cultures studied. Social studies teachers need to critically assess the curriculum materials to insure that the "subjective culture" (i.e., the way in which individuals perceive their social environment) of the people under study is properly presented. Attribution theory suggests that serious misunderstandings often occur because individuals do not know the "subjective culture" and consequently make incorrect attributions (Triandis, 1977).

In addition, all educators should strive to create schools where the prevailing ethos is one of acceptance and tolerance. This can be accomplished in several ways. First, all teachers, faculty and staff need to model ICS. In other words, school personal need to be flexible thinkers, empathic, and perspective takers. In addition, these attributes and attitudes should be encouraged amongst the students. Also, teachers must envision themselves as enablers rather than the "all knowing authorities." Classrooms should be designed within a democratic framework where respect for a diversity of opinion is evident. Within this framework, instructional methods centered within a cooperative learning philosophy hold the potential to improve intercultural relations (Slavin, 1995). Finally, teachers must realize that early adolescents are in transition. Developmentally, early adolescents tend to perceive their world from a more authoritarian standpoint than do older adolescents (Adelson, 1971). Thus, teachers need to have realistic expectations of how interculturally sensitive children can be.

Likewise, educators need to encourage and allow boys and girls to express the range of emotions and traits that society identifies as masculine and feminine. For example, both boys and girls should be encouraged to be nurturing and assertive depending upon the circumstance. Teachers need to check their own actions. For example, do they treat girls differently than boys? Do they reinforce feminine behavior among girls and masculine behavior among boys? Also, attention should be paid to the curriculum. Is it gender fair? In sum, both boys and girls need to be allowed to experience the range of traditional masculine and feminine gender roles. This may encourage the cognitive flexibility associated with the develop of ICS.

In sum, educators, especially social studies teachers, can play an important role in aiding

early adolescents to develop the proper attitudes and dispositions to develop ICS. This, in turn, will enable the youth of today to become more culturally sensitive citizens of tomorrow.

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Appendix A

Ethnicity of Participants

Ethnicity	Urban	Suburban	Rural	Total
African American	13 (30%)	7 (13%)	0	20 (14%)
American Indian or Alaskan Native	2 (5%)	0	2 (4 %)	4 (3%)
Asian or Pacific Islander	16 (37.5)	2 (4%)	1 (2 %)	19 (13%)
Hispanic	1 (2%)	2 (4%)	0	3 (2%)
White	3 (7%)	35 (66%)	46 (94 %)	84 (58%)
Other	7 (16.5%)	6 (11%)	0	13 (9%)
No Answer	1 (2%)	1 (2%)	0	2 (2%)
TOTAL	43	53	49	145

$\bar{x}$ age = 12.7

Appendix B

A Summary of Favorable Conditions for Intercultural Contact

1. All members of the group must have equal status.
2. Emphasis is placed on cooperation, as opposed to competition.
3. Outward support of the relevant authorities is evident.
4. Sustained and one-on-one is needed between individuals.
5. Contact is between members of the in-group and high status out-group members.
6. Contact is of a pleasant and rewarding nature.

Amir, 1969

Footnotes

[1] All names in this study are pseudonyms.

[2] All quotations are verbatim.

[3] The urban subsample consisted of 30 percent African American students. This was 16 percent greater than the suburban subsample and 30 percent greater than the rural subsample. In addition, 16.5 percent of the students from the urban locale classified themselves as "other." Of this group, many identified themselves as biracial (i.e., African American and European American).

Figure 1

Bennett's Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity

Monocultural Stages				Intercultural Stages			
Avoidance	Protection	Reversal	Minimization	Acceptance	Adaptation	Evaluation	Marginality
isolation	unfavorable outgroup assessment	favorable outgroup assessment	physical universalism	respect for behavior differences	empathy	contextual assessment	flexible ingroup identification
separation	favorable ingroup assessment	unfavorable ingroup assessment	transcendent universalism	respect for value differences	pluralism		

Adapted from Hammer (in press).

Table 1

Summary of IDI Stage, Score and Frequency

IDI Stage	Score		n
Avoidance	1		
Protection	2		
Reversal	3		
	3.5	XX	2
		XX	2
Minimization	4	XX	2
		XXXXXXX	7
	4.5	XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX	21
		XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX	32
Acceptance	5	XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX	36
		XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX	16
	5.5	XXXXX	5
		XXX	3
Adaptation	6		
Evaluation	7		
Marginality	8		

N = 126

$\bar{x}$ = 4.9

Table 2

Summary of Regression Analysis for Variables Predicting Intercultural Sensitivity (N=124)

Explanatory Variable	B	SE B	Pr (B = 0)
Intercept	6.07	0.63	<0.01
Sex	0.42	0.38	0.27
Androgyny	0.21	0.08	0.01
Rural Location	-0.63	0.30	0.04
Suburban Location	-0.59	0.29	0.04
Intercultural Relationships	0.22	0.08	0.01
Sex and Rural Location Interaction	0.40	0.18	0.03
Sex and Suburban Location Interaction	0.47	0.17	0.01
Sex and Intercultural Relationships Interaction	-0.10	0.05	0.00

Note. $R^2 = 0.27$.